

Sheppey Area Committee meeting: September 2023 – Matters arising

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Connectivity across Sheppey	A question was asked at the June 2021 meeting about transport issues on the Island. The Quality Bus Partnership has been suspended while Kent County Council (KCC) look at how to set up an Enhanced Partnership which will replace the QBP.	<p>KCC finally received £19m at the end of March 2023 to deliver a reduced set of initiatives within its BSIP. This included £100k of fare initiatives that will be delivered over the summer county wide (e.g. Big Kent Weekend) and also £2.5m of network improvements. In July 2023, KCC were told they had received a further £16m to deliver BSIP initiatives for 2024/25. At the time of writing this a key decision at KCC Cabinet was needed to accept this money.</p> <p>As part of the funding, Government requires that each area (KCC) set up an Enhanced Partnership (EP). This is a statutory Board, without which KCC will not receive their funding. KCC have established their EP Board which is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Highways & Infrastructure at KCC. It is an officer led meeting, high level and strategic. There are no representatives from districts. The bus operators do have representatives (including CEX Chalkwell).</p> <p>The EP will not cover any local district issues. To fill that gap, KCC are</p>

			<p>suggesting EP Local Focus Group (EP LFGs) meetings be set up in each district. They are happy to send representatives but cannot resource it like they used to do the QBP and so are asking districts to set up and resource them. These are not a statutory requirement.</p> <p>As such SBC are looking at if the local focus group should be set up and resourced. This is being discussed at Planning & Transportation Policy Working Group on 19 September 2023. If it is set up it will be held every 6 months and be a forum for SBC, KCC and local bus operators to come together to discuss issues.</p>
2.	Dumping of spoil on the Eastchurch shoreline	<p>KCC Councillor Andy Booth asked if a report could be brought back to a future Sheppey Area Committee meeting providing details about the spoil that has been dumped on the Eastchurch shoreline. He said that it was important that the public were aware of what was happening. The Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods reported that a multi-agency group continue to explore possible options for action led by the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>Since the last Area Committee update, we are pleased to confirm that the multi-agency group, led by the Environment Agency, secured a restriction order at Third Avenue, Eastchurch. This has resulted in all dumping activity coming to a stop at the location. We continue to monitor other sites on the Isle of Sheppey that may still be active.</p> <p>The agency group continue to meet to look at the next steps.</p>
3.	Queenborough Guildhall	<p>The condition of Queenborough Guildhall was discussed at the Regeneration & Property Committee and it was resolved that the inclusion of</p>	<p>The Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods advised that condition surveys have now been carried out on</p>

		<p>Queenborough Guildhall in the recommended programme of Condition Surveys be supported by the Committee.</p> <p>The Buildings Manager advised the condition survey carried out was for the 'joint' building of Guildhall and 44 High Street.</p> <p>Although there is no heating in the Guildhall part, there is heating in the offices part of 44 High Street & the museum.</p> <p>A new & updated condition survey will be carried out and will include a defining split of the building.</p>	<p>both the Guildhall and 44 High Street with recommendations and associated costs for works. The Council is working on a programme of works depending on the budget available.</p>
4.	New Road Play Park, Minster-on-Sea	<p>At the September 2022 meeting members agreed a bid of £20,000.00 submitted by Councillor Elliott Jayes for improvements to New Road Play Park, Minster-on-Sea.</p>	<p>The Play Improvement Project was completed on time and opened 30 June 2023.</p>
5.	Beach Hut proposal	<p>Further to the presentation of the beach huts proposal setting out SBC's intention to install a further 24 beach huts on the Isle of Sheppey, a report went to the July 2023 Regeneration and Property Committee with a new policy and summary of the consultation responses.</p>	<p>The decision to proceed with Phase 1 (Minster x 12 & Leysdown x 14) was agreed at the Regeneration & Property Committee on 6 July 2023. Review of tender documents is underway with procurement ahead of live tender. Target for live tender is the end of September 2023 with construction intended ready for the start of April 2024.</p>
6.	CCTV camera Queenborough Causeway	<p>A Member spoke about the CCTV camera that had been installed to deal with the anti-social behaviour and jet skis off Queenborough Causeway. He said</p>	<p>The Community Services Manager advised the Community Services Unit continues to monitor the need for a</p>

		<p>that the camera had been taken down and as a result the jet skis had returned.</p> <p>The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods said the camera in Queenborough was a mobile one and due to very few incidents in recent months, and as there was such a low stock of them, it has been redeployed elsewhere. Should incidents of ASB/crime in the area increase after its removal, or as weather improves another deployment or possibly a permanent camera could be considered.</p> <p>At the June 2023 meeting Members spoke about anti-social behaviour incidents that had taken place recently at that location and asked for the CCTV camera to be put back as soon as possible. At a recent Community Safety Partnership (CSP) meeting the possibility of a camera funded jointly by the Town Council and Swale Borough Council (SBC) was mentioned.</p>	<p>camera in Queenborough and if there is the sufficient evidence required. Recent meetings have been taking place between partner agencies to improve responses to tackling jet ski issues in the area.</p>
7.	Active Travel update	<p>The Active Travel Coordinator advised that the Isle of Sheppey bid for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 had not made it through to the final submission to Active Travel England. However, SBC had received funding from the Capability and Ambition Fund for a feasibility study to improve connectivity between Minster, Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was progressing, funding had been received to do detailed route mapping.</p>	<p>Consultants WSP have been fully briefed and started work on a Sheppey Towns Active Travel Connectivity Feasibility Study. This work is expected to be completed in November 2023.</p>

8.	Police presence on the Isle of Sheppey	A Member stated that Kent Police had removed the Police Community Support Officer presence from the Isle of Sheppey and suggested that a representative of the Police come along to Area Committee meetings. It was agreed that the Chair would write a letter to Kent Police inviting a representative to attend future meetings.	A Police representative will be attending the September 2023 meeting under a separate item.
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